

## THE PRISONERS OF AMERICA

With a Quarter of Its Prisoners in Jails and Penitentiaries and Two Per Cent. in Reformatories, the United States Lags Behind in Its Treatment of Offenders—The Coming International Prison Congress.

LEWIS E. PALMER,  
Exclusive Service The Survey Press  
(Bureau.)

"County jails are free schools for crime" according to the report of an investigating committee under the chairmanship of Charles R. Henderson, the University of Chicago professor recently elected American member of the International Prison Commission. And yet the latest figures obtainable show that 7-10 per cent. of the prison population of this country is confined to criminal-making county jails and State prisons. According to latest figures there are in municipal prisons and work houses 7.6 per cent. of the population in the United States, and 2.9 per cent. are in reformatories. The surprising fact is that about half of America's offenders range between the ages of ten and thirty; (there were according to the latest figures 26,993 "boys" between 20 and 24, and 13,886 between 15 and 19, and 696 between 10 and 14.)

Drunkennes, now largely looked upon as a disease, is responsible for 23 per cent. of the total prison population, vagrancy for 20 per cent., and disorderly conduct for 11 per cent. Here are accounted for over half of America's offenders imprisoned for drunkenness, vagrancy and disorderly conduct; and yet provision is made in reformatories for only 2.9 per cent. of this prison population, about half of which falls between the ages of 10 and 20—a bad reflection of America's public policy in dealing with these offenders.

It is the recognized policy of modern criminology that first offenders and many drinking men who are committed to jail on sentences might better be disposed of by suspending the execution of their sentences, on condition that they secure employment, use their earnings for the support of their families and keep clear of vicious company. If the court has a probation officer, the man should be placed under his supervision. If there is no probation officer, the man should be required to report to the court, or to some person designated by it, at stated periods. If work on public roads is in progress, it might be required that men released on suspended sentences.

Every convicted person, the moment sentence is pronounced, should be placed immediately to the proper reformatory, penitentiary, district workhouse or labor colony. Thus the number of persons in county jails in idle hands would be greatly reduced.

According to the general policy of the United States at present, short sentences in jail and penitentiaries are made by the majority of judges.

## NATIONAL RECORDS; CHINA ACCEPTS CRANE CONNECTICUT MEN

Nutmeg State Has Produced Many Men of More Than Usual Ability.

It is an interesting study to search the old records of our national government and note the names of men from the various states who were famous in their day, and who filled the high places of trust and power. From the earliest colonial times to the present day, Connecticut men on these pages. True, Connecticut has never had a president or a vice-president, but in the early times and down to 1840, several of our best men were selected as cabinet members of presidents.

The first cabinet minister was Oliver Wolcott, Jr., who was secretary of the treasury under President Washington. He succeeded Alexander Hamilton, February 2, 1795, and served until January 1, 1801. Thomas Jefferson had in the cabinet the first several postmaster generals from Connecticut, in the person of Gideon Granger, who served under four administrations, from November 28, 1801, until March 17, 1814, the longest term of any cabinet member from Connecticut.

It was not until 1840 that Connecticut secured another cabinet minister, President Van Buren chose John M. Niles as postmaster general May 19, 1840, and he served until March 4, 1841. The next administration had no Connecticut man in the cabinet, but President Polk made Isaac Toucey attorney general June 21, 1845, and he was continued by President Taylor until March 8, 1849. Secretary of the navy by President Buchanan March 6, 1867, serving until March 6, 1869, when Gideon Welles succeeded him as the secretary of the navy. President Grant continued to Johnson, but President Grant named a Pennsylvania man in his place, March 5, 1869.

President Fillmore selected his postmaster general from Connecticut and Samuel D. Hubbard was the man. He served from August 31, 1850, until March 7, 1852. Secretary of the navy was the fourth and last postmaster general from Connecticut. President Grant named him August 24, 1874 and he was the last cabinet officer from Connecticut, since 1876 no one has been selected from our state as a member of the president's official family.

## CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.  
The Kind You Have Always Bought  
Bears the Signature of *Dr. J. C. H. H. H.*

## TO BE NO CHANGE IN PLAN OF BOSSES

(Special from United Press.)  
Newark, July 18.—President Samuel A. M. H. of the United Hat Manufacturers declared to-day the recent vote of the striking haters would cause no change in the manufacturers' plan. Speaking for the Essex County manufacturers involved in the strike he said: "We are prepared to hear that the vote would be likely to keep up the strike and induce on the part of the strikers that the tip had gone around from the strike leaders that if the vote was to keep up the strike the manufacturers would be sure to vote against it. The vote was erroneous and will not change the attitude of the manufacturers who felt that in taking the open-shop stand and turning on the strikers they were paying before the breach with the union took place, they were in the right. It is a little unfortunate that the first plan of the committee of the Essex County Grand Jury which took up the matter, to have the ballots sent by post individually by the strikers, was not carried. The strikers would have in such a case been less under the influence of the leaders than they were in two halls in New Jersey."

WANT ADS. CENT A WORD.

ment. Over 28 per cent. of the prisoners in this country, according to latest figures, were sentenced for under one month. About 19 per cent. received one month sentences, 7.5 per cent. two months and 11 per cent. three months sentences. The state penitentiary worked out in the generally degrading influences of county jails and penitentiaries.

When the Eighth International Prison Congress meets in Washington in 1910 one of the section meetings will consider these questions:

"What are the essential principles of a modern reformatory system, and upon what rational methods should it be based? Should its application be limited by age, sex, other classification? If so, under what limitations?"

"Must we not admit the necessity of special treatment for youthful criminals and even recidivists from sixteen to twenty-one or twenty-three years, recognizing the plasticity of that age and the possibility of curing by special methods physical, moral and intellectual defects?"

(a) Sufficiently long to permit the full application of all means of reformation.

(b) Permitting the free application of conditional liberation?

The Congress bulletin states that the reformation of the prisoner is now universally accepted as one of the principal ends of prison administration. The main question is how it is to be secured? With this end in view different prison systems have been developed. Under one system the prisoner is required to be best promoted by completely isolating the offender from his fellow prisoners with a view to individual treatment. In other systems the treatment is preferred as a preparation for social duties. The methods of treatment under these systems differ widely, and the theory of the treatment, organization, and discipline of the prison are affected by them. The object of the question is to bring out the principles and methods which are varied they may be, accepted in different countries, not merely for punishing the prisoner for his offense, but for properly preparing him to lead a law-abiding life on returning to society.

Perhaps the Prison Congress of next year will lead to renewed interest in the important question of reformatory treatment of prisoners the same way that last year's great International Tuberculosis Congress has resulted in a new era of interest in the treatment of the great White Plague. The United States has been the leader in children's courts. It should not lag behind in reformatory treatment of its prisoners.

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